

ROCKY FLATS CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD**MINUTES OF WORK SESSION****August 6, 1998**

FACILITATOR: Reed Hodgins, AlphaTRAC

Tom Marshall called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Alan Aluisi, Carol Barker, Susan Barron, Meir Carasso, Tom Clark, Mary Harlow, Victor Holm, Bob Kanick, Jim Kinsinger, Tom Marshall, David Navarro, Linda Sikkema / Steve Gunderson, Joe Legare, Tim Rehder**BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tom Davidson, Eugene DeMayo, Tom Gallegos, Beverly Lyne / Jeremy Karpatkin**PUBLIC / OBSERVERS PRESENT:** Kenneth Werth (citizen); Kristi Branch (PNNL); Judith Bradbury (PNNL/DC); Jim Stone (RFCC); Karen Lowrie (CRESP); Michael Greenberg (CRESP); Regina Sarter (DOE-RFFO); John Corsi (K-H); Anna May Doyle (citizen); Carol Lyons (City of Arvada); Nancy L. Hollinger (CC of Blue Mountain); Alan Trenary (citizen); DeAnne Butterfield (RFLII); Colleen Dailey (CAB intern); Ken Korkia (CAB staff); Erin Rogers (CAB staff); Deb Thompson (CAB staff); Brady Wilson (CAB staff)**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

Comment: Kenneth Werth: In the decontamination and decommissioning of Building 779, there are 41 gloveboxes, what are they doing with the highly radioactive plutonium and uranium? Where are they storing the material? Why are you decommissioning that building? Wouldn't it be better to leave it with the gloveboxes in place? Because you don't know when WIPP is going to open, and there are a number of class action suits already that will shut the WIPP site down for years to come. Why even try to decommission this building and decontaminate it? Why don't you wait until you find out if you can really ship this stuff instead of putting in boxes and letting it sit onsite. That's more of a hazard to the population of the metro area than to just let the building sit as it is.

Response: Joe Legare: It's 42 gloveboxes now. Many of those gloveboxes are contaminated with plutonium, and are being characterized and packaged as transuranic waste or transuranic mixed waste, and stored appropriately with other such waste that we have onsite. That material is not leaving the site, it's being stored appropriately as transuranic waste until such time as we are able to ship transuranic waste offsite. You're right regarding the hazards, and once the other special nuclear materials are offsite, we then look at the risk posed by transuranic waste as the greatest risk onsite. The storage requirements and authorization basis, engineered controls on a building, are designed to mitigate those risks and hazards. Just as with the glovebox sitting as it is, we have the same engineered controls for waste sitting in a drum to ensure the material stays in the drum and is not released to the environment.

Comment: Jim Stone: I want to compliment you on getting a microphone, and now if you invite your guests to dinner you might be recognized as a contemporary organization. I too am concerned about the delay in opening WIPP, and I am a rebuttal witness in the lawsuit against Rockwell. In the last few months I have been reviewing everything from 1980 to date. We're not making a lot of progress. It's sickening to see what we've gone through the last couple of decades. I'll hope you'll speed things up, because the wind is still blowing that contamination into Westminster and there isn't a lot being done. When we get the new Energy Secretary, he needs to be informed that the management at this site knows what to do, and if they don't, the contractor will do it. But they've got to get out of the way.

Response: Tom Marshall: Regarding your first comments, I would love to invite you to dinner, but DOE says we can't do that.

REGULATOR UPDATE: Steve Gunderson reviewed issues being tracked by CDPHE:

- RFCA Biennial Review: The principals will meet on August 14 to discuss the Biennial Review report. RFCA project coordinators will prepare a Responsiveness Summary regarding the report's finding, including issues about establishing milestones, the collaborative process, budgetary issues, dispute resolution, and enforcement.
- Building 779 Decommissioning: As of July 29, 41 gloveboxes had been removed. Milestone 3 (FY98) was for removal of 40 gloveboxes by the end of this fiscal year; the milestone has been met.
- Trench 1: To date, 138 drums of depleted uranium have been excavated from the western side of the trench, although only 125 drums were expected to be found. Based on geophysical surveys, no additional drums are expected on the eastern portion of the trench. Samples taken from drums show higher levels of chlorinated solvents than anticipated, and a few drums have low concentrations of PCBs. The presence of solvents and PCBs will make shipment offsite more problematic. The FY98 milestone for the trench states excavation and shipment offsite of wastes would be complete by the end of the fiscal year; excavation should be complete by then but shipment offsite is unlikely.
- Out Year Milestones: DOE proposed minor changes to the milestones, which the regulatory agencies will accept.
- FY98 Target T3: The target for the installation of the Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System into Building 707 by September 30 will not be met. A new target has been established for installation of the system into Building 371 by March 2000. Plutonium stabilization will not be automated in the new system. DOE states that the later date for system installation won't impact packaging all plutonium metal and oxides by the May 2002 commitment date.
- NPDES Permit: A permit is being finalized by EPA. CDPHE is funding a facilitator for the Surface Water Issues Meetings to seek agreement on long term surface water monitoring and pond management issues. A technical group has been formed to look at the issue of discharging water directly from Pond B5.

- WIPP: WIPP is not expected to open before September 30; therefore, FY98 milestones to begin shipping wastes to WIPP will not be met.

UPDATE FROM DOE. Joe Legare gave a brief update on WIPP. DOE has not received a permit to ship legacy waste (TRU waste); they are awaiting EPA certification. Much waste has been generated through the residues program and with glovebox removal. Currently that waste is being stored onsite. The site must decide soon what to do with this waste. A process will be put in place, including public comment, for the site to work on contingency plans if WIPP does not open. DOE must plan for additional storage, and needs input to help decide and answer specific questions about the type of structures needed, etc.

PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION BY CRESP ON COMMUNITY SURVEY (Karen Lowrie and Michael Greenberg, CRESP): CRESP is a consortium working through Rutgers University. Its work over the past three years has focused on questions regarding the areas surrounding DOE nuclear weapons sites, such as. Some issues already studied include:

- *What is the social and economic status of regions around these sites?* CRESP has found a wide variation; both Hanford and Savannah River show dual and weakened economies, where Rocky Flats and Los Alamos/Sandia have stronger economies.
- *What was the economic impact on regions around the sites?* More jobs and more income than otherwise expected, but it is uneven. There also seems to be an uneven distribution of potential risks.
- *What are plausible economic futures?* Hanford, Idaho, and Savannah River are more dependent on DOE funds, where Los Alamos, Oak Ridge and Rocky Flats would have a lesser impact by a cut in DOE funds. If reduction occurs more gradually, there is less impact. The rural regions lose a great deal of investment in high technologies. In more urbanized areas, there are more issues about stakeholder preferences, risks, land use, etc.
- *What are stakeholder preferences for future land use and economies?* This varies widely by site, but it is at least as much about economic health as environmental risk. Future land use is extremely important to adjacent communities.

Ongoing projects by CRESP include an analysis of land use preferences around FUSRAP, UMTRA and smaller DOE sites; land use and stewardship near Rocky Flats; and a comparison of newspaper coverage of nuclear and chemical weapons sites (Rocky Flats, Savannah River, Tooele, Anniston).

CRESP has begun to plan for the Rocky Flats survey on land use and stewardship issues. It will focus on demographics, the quality of residential areas, standard questions to compare with other national surveys, issues of trust and credibility, and then specific questions regarding land use and stewardship such as which groups/agencies should be involved in managing the site in the future.

CRESP plans to do a pilot test of the survey of about 200 individuals to test the survey instrument, then after performing the survey it will provide a full analysis, including raw data, to CAB.

Next steps are to finalize the survey; conduct the pre-test and revise the survey if necessary; select the sampling distribution; conduct the survey; do preliminary data analysis; and present the final results. A group of Board members volunteered to work with CRESP.

REPORT ON THE SAN DIEGO AND CHICAGO INTERSITE DISCUSSIONS

(Mary Harlow and Victor Holm): Workshops were held in June for SSABs through the weapons complex and any other interested individuals from those affected sites. Mary Harlow and Victor Holm attended. Participants at the workshops were able to share their views and frustrations. Most agreed that the issues are national, not just local, and cross-cutting. No formal decisions were made, except an agreement that DOE should hold such a conference again so these conversations can continue. The theme at the workshops was cooperation, such as working together on increasing budgets for what needs to be done at all sites, rather than arguing over who gets what and who gets more. Both Mary and Victor agreed it was valuable to get a perspective on other sites and their issues. A written report on the workshops will be prepared this fall.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Comment: Jim Stone: My first comment was to apologize to your guests. I didn't realize that you asked them to appear. I wanted to explain to them the difference between an engineer and a scientist. An engineer is usually saddled with a budget and a time constraint. You'll notice in any of our reports, the first sentence in the paragraph says the whole thing. With a scientist, you've got to wade through everything because they never want to quit. Engineers finish it a job at a time. I want to ask you Tom, why you invited these folks? If you have a risk problem, you've got experts with the Health Advisory Panel that have talked ad nauseum about risk. If you wanted to know about the future use potential of Rocky Flats, you've got the Future Site Use Working Group that have studied this and come up with suggestions. It's even written up in the regulations that they must comply with. If that isn't good enough, you go to the Rocky Flats Local Impacts Initiative. That is their sole purpose, to decide what to do with the site. With all those resources, why did you invite these folks?

Response: Tom Marshall: We'd be happy to supply you with a letter that we did send to CRESP inviting them here, and that lays it out fairly well. We felt that getting more input on future site use was important in terms of the cleanup at Rocky Flats. You may think it's a done deal, but it does not seem to be. It's a very fluid situation. That's the way most of us see it at this point.

Comment: Kenneth Werth: It doesn't seem as though WIPP is going to be opening in the next three or four years, or ever. So Building 779, instead of decontaminating and decommissioning that building and the 41 gloveboxes that already have been cut up and put into containers, why can't you keep the other 49 gloveboxes open and store all the cut up gloveboxes and waste there? That would be an idea. I'm not in favor of doing any more decommissioning and decontamination out there. I'm for having that building stay open to store the rest of the gloveboxes that already have been cut up.

Response: David Navarro: I think it's essential that we keep on track with D&D. Building 779 is the first major hot building. It serves a couple of purposes. One is to be a demonstrator that we can do this safely and efficiently. Several months ago, I asked what would happen if WIPP doesn't open. I was told then what we're hearing now. It's a bottleneck, and we're going to have to find some storage onsite and get the appropriate approval to do so. We've been told they won't be tents any more. It will be some kind of

building, even if it's a Morgan building. There are other options. We have 886, 865, 883, and other buildings that can be used for additional waste storage. You've heard me say several times how I thought it was inappropriate for DOE to occupy 460 as an office building, when that would have made a great storage building. We need to figure out a way to accommodate additional waste until the problem with WIPP is resolved. But we also need to continue with D&D, and I think we can balance that and do both.

Comment: Alan Trenary: I looked forward to coming to this meeting, because I knew the information about WIPP being postponed, there would be a lot of tension. There are a lot of groups involved in this that feel that it's completely political and we're not going to get anywhere with it. The size and scope of the problem at Rocky Flats, it's going to be there a long time. I don't believe it can be made into open space. I think this is much too drastic and complex of a problem. I have spent a lot of time talking to David Skaggs' office, and if we're going to have any effect on the people in Washington, D.C., and enlarge this pie, we're going to need a survey and information that CRESPI is talking about. This is the kind of information that politicians use to make their decisions. If we don't have a detailed, powerful study that shows a good strong indication of what's going on here, they will think that people don't really care and we can do what we want to do. The only way we're going to get them involved is by pursuing them with questions and giving them information concerning this issue. Look at the expensive houses at Rock Creek and Superior. People are living close to Rocky Flats and they're spending a lot of money on these homes. They're not being educated as to potential risks. I feel it's ours and CAB's duty to get these people informed.

Comments: The public comment period led to a discussion between Board members about issues related to WIPP, onsite storage and transportation of waste. In summary, one Board member felt it is important for citizens to voice their views to elected officials, and let them know their feelings on possibly turning Rocky Flats into an onsite, above ground storage site. Another was concerned about the ramifications of not opening WIPP, and impact on the site's closure plans. This will significantly alter the site's strategy, and it needs to be discussed. Finally, another Board member noted that D&D largely produces the waste that would be shipped to WIPP. By not allowing for some type of onsite storage, D&D procedures may be terminated, and it would make it easier for DOE to discontinue funding and walk away from the closure mission.

PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION ON INDUSTRIAL AREA REUSE TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT (DeAnne Butterfield, RFLII): The task force began in July 1997, and was formed to evaluate potential uses for the Rocky Flats Industrial Area after cleanup of the site is completed. Research by the task force and public input show a wide range of opinions. The task force issued a consensus recommendation on June 8. Following are highlights:

- Due to uncertainties, specific future use decisions cannot be made at this time.
- All facilities and infrastructure should be removed as part of closure.
- Cleanup the Industrial Area to a standard suitable for a future employment center.
- Cleanup plans must preserve community options for future use and stewardship.

- The community should establish an ongoing entity for continued cooperation on future use and stewardship.
- The task force also recognized other significant issues in its recommendation, such as the community's interest in protecting the Buffer Zone as open space, the mountain backdrop project, highway safety and planning, worker transition, regional planning, documentation and interpretation of Rocky Flats' role in the Cold War, and long term stewardship.

The final report of the task force will be available for public comment through August 21. Copies are available from the Rocky Flats Local Impacts Initiative.

UPDATE / DISCUSSION ON CAB FORUM (Erin Rogers): A group of Board members, along with several interested citizens, have worked on developing a plan for a possible CAB-sponsored forum, tentatively planned for mid-November. The audience would be residents from communities surrounding Rocky Flats, with an emphasis on bringing new people into the process. The forum's purpose would be to provide an opportunity to learn about cleanup and future use plans, and how those relate. A good deal of planning and a commitment to involvement from Board members would be necessary for the forum to succeed. After discussion, CAB members were not sure whether the forum should be held at this time.

***Decision:** Table this item, and review for possible CAB sponsorship of such an event in the future. APPROVED BY CONSENSUS.*

LETTER ON WORKER DISABILITY / RETIREMENT BENEFITS ISSUES (Jim Kinsinger): The Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group prepared a letter to DOE and Kaiser-Hill regarding medical benefits for Rocky Flats retirees and disabled workers. The letter reiterates the position stated by CAB in 1996 that DOE and future contractors commit to providing lifetime health care benefits at the same level and cost those individuals had at the beginning of their retirement or placement on long-term disability. Kaiser-Hill is now considering a proposal that would increase costs of medical coverage for Rocky Flats retirees. The letter states that these benefits should not be altered, and asks DOE to explore options available to separate funding for retiree medical benefits from the annual cleanup budget. Also, in this letter CAB noted that DOE has an obligation to develop a clear plan for how it will finance retiree medical benefits after closure and once there is no longer a contractor at the site.

***Decision:** Approve letter of recommendation to DOE and Kaiser-Hill regarding preservation of medical benefits for disabled and retired Rocky Flats workers, with minor changes and additions to the text. APPROVED WITH ONE ABSTENTION.*

LETTER ON MATERIALS CHARACTERIZATION AND STORAGE CONCERNS (Mary Harlow): The Plutonium Issues Focus Group reviewed two occurrence reports from the Operating Experience Weekly Summary, produced by DOE's Office of Nuclear and Facility Safety. One occurrence resulted in a violation of nuclear material safety limits, and the other involved improper storage of scrub alloy material. The focus group prepared a letter for Board approval, noting its specific concerns.

- The letter notes several criticality safety infractions, and that DOE stated a need for

personnel to clearly understand criticality safety issues and to write clear and accurate procedures. The Board requested that DOE provide information on the corrective actions taken to address these concerns.

- CAB's letter also discussed a quotation from the report that "Operations personnel and managers expressed more concern over the loss of production time rather than the safety significance of this event." CAB reiterated its position that safety must come first and meeting production or closure milestones second.
- The report indicates that problems continue with improper storage of scrub alloy material, and although significant progress has occurred, materials stored in unsafe configurations continue to appear. CAB asked for information on: 1) when the site will complete its inventory and characterization of every container of nuclear material; and 2) what actions have been taken to ensure implementation of a 1996 plan to sample and analyze storage containers to ensure they are properly classified.

Decision: Approve letter of recommendation to DOE regarding materials characterization and storage concerns, with minor changes to the text. **APPROVED BY CONSENSUS.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- Committee chair: Eugene DeMayo was approved by the Board to serve as chair of the Membership Committee.
- New Board members: The Membership Committee recommended three individuals to serve on the Board. The following individuals were approved unanimously by the Board:

=> Gerald DePoorter. An associate professor of Metallurgical Engineering at the Colorado School of Mines, Gerald has a Ph.D. in Engineering, an MS in Engineering, and a BS in Ceramic Engineering. He has previously worked as a geochemistry project manager and research scientist for Los Alamos National Laboratory, and has co-authored numerous scientific studies and reports. Gerald is a resident of Lakewood.

=> Bryan Taylor. Bryan is an associate professor with the Department of Communication at CU-Boulder. He has completed a variety of studies and reports on communication in and about DOE facilities, and the interaction between nuclear weapons authorities and public interest groups. Bryan has a Ph.D. in Communication, an MS in Speech Communication and a BA in Communication Studies. He is currently a resident of Longmont.

=> Bob Thielke. Bob is an environmental project manager with TechLaw, Inc., where he is responsible for analytical data validation and auditing at the site, providing data assessment, usability and data management. He has an MS in Environmental Management and Policy, and a BS in Chemical Engineering. Bob also worked as an analytical technician for the U.S. Geological Survey Water Quality Laboratory in Arvada. He is a resident of Lakewood.

- Request for leave of absence: A leave of absence from the Board was requested by

Beverly Lyne, through January 1999. The Board approved her request.

NEXT MEETING:

Date: September 3, 1998, 6 - 9:30 p.m.

Location: Westminster City Hall, lower-level Multi-Purpose Room, 4800 West 92nd Avenue, Westminster

Agenda: Prepare draft 1999 CAB work plan; report back to CAB on Low Level Waste Seminar held in Nevada; letter to DOE-HQ regarding funding for retiree benefits; comments on the draft Surplus Plutonium Disposition EIS; comments and questions to DOE regarding Year 2000 (Y2K) issues

ACTION ITEM SUMMARY: ASSIGNED TO:

1. Meet with CRESP to finalize survey of Rocky Flats area residents - Board members volunteering
2. Revise and forward letter of recommendation to DOE and Kaiser-Hill regarding benefits for retired and disabled Rocky Flats workers - Erin Rogers
3. Revise and forward letter of recommendation to DOE on materials characterization and storage concerns - Ken Korkia

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:15 P.M. *

(* Taped transcript of full meeting is available in CAB office.)

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Tom Gallegos, Secretary
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is a community advisory group that reviews and provides recommendations on cleanup plans for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside of Denver, Colorado.

[Top of Page](#) | [Index of Meeting Minutes](#) | [Home](#)

[Citizens Advisory Board Info](#) | [Rocky Flats Info](#) | [Links](#) | [Feedback & Questions](#)